

Reflections on the Process of Implementing a Large Scale Teacher Improvement Programme Throughout Kazakhstan

Background

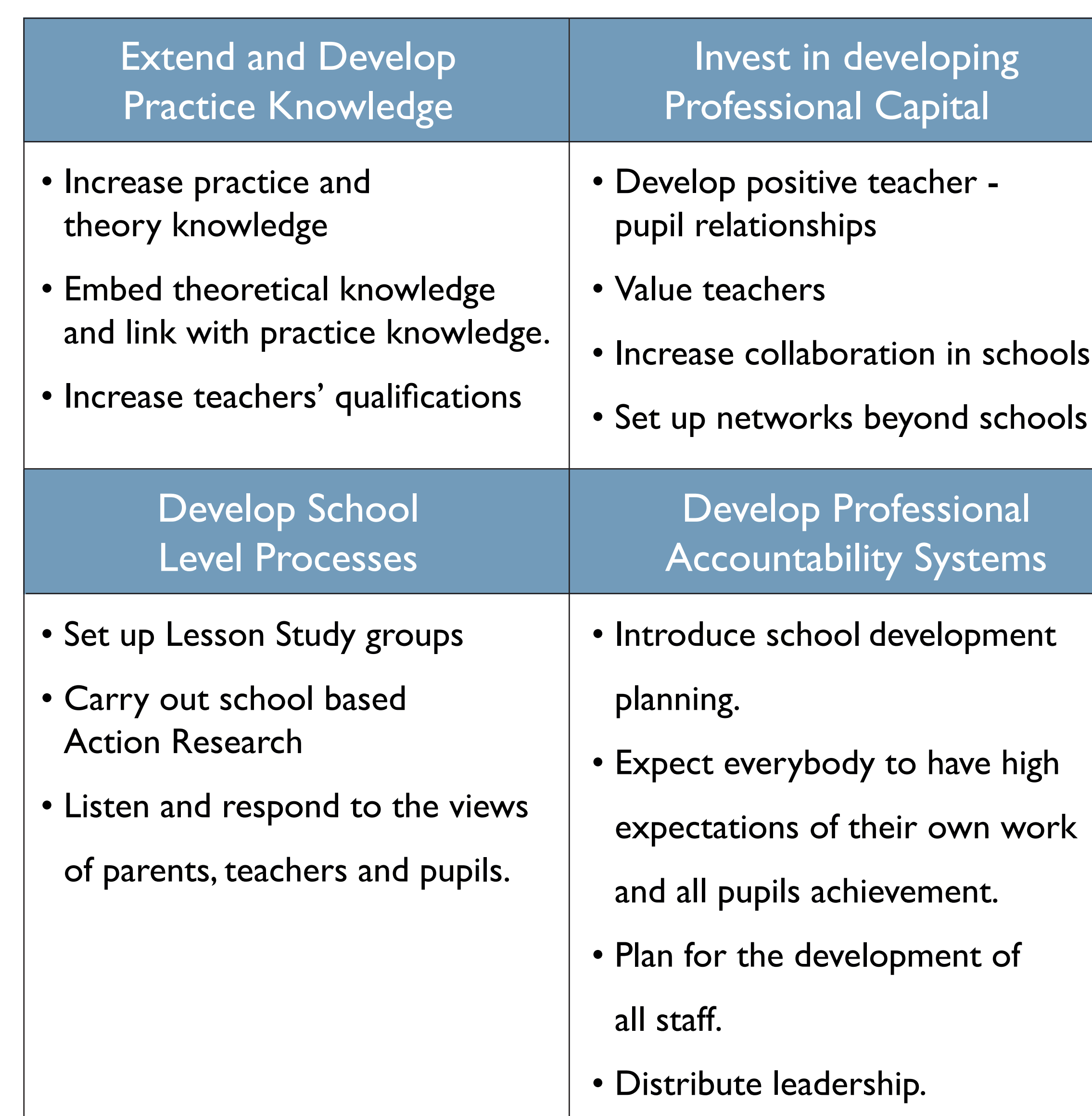
Kazakhstan became an independent Republic in 1991. In 2010 the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MoESRK) identified teacher education as a top priority in their 2020 strategic plan.

'Kazakhstan is going through a period of rapid and energetic educational reform aimed at raising the quality of educational experience for all and addressing in particular the inequalities of opportunity and achievement between urban schools and mainly small and multi-grade rural schools'.

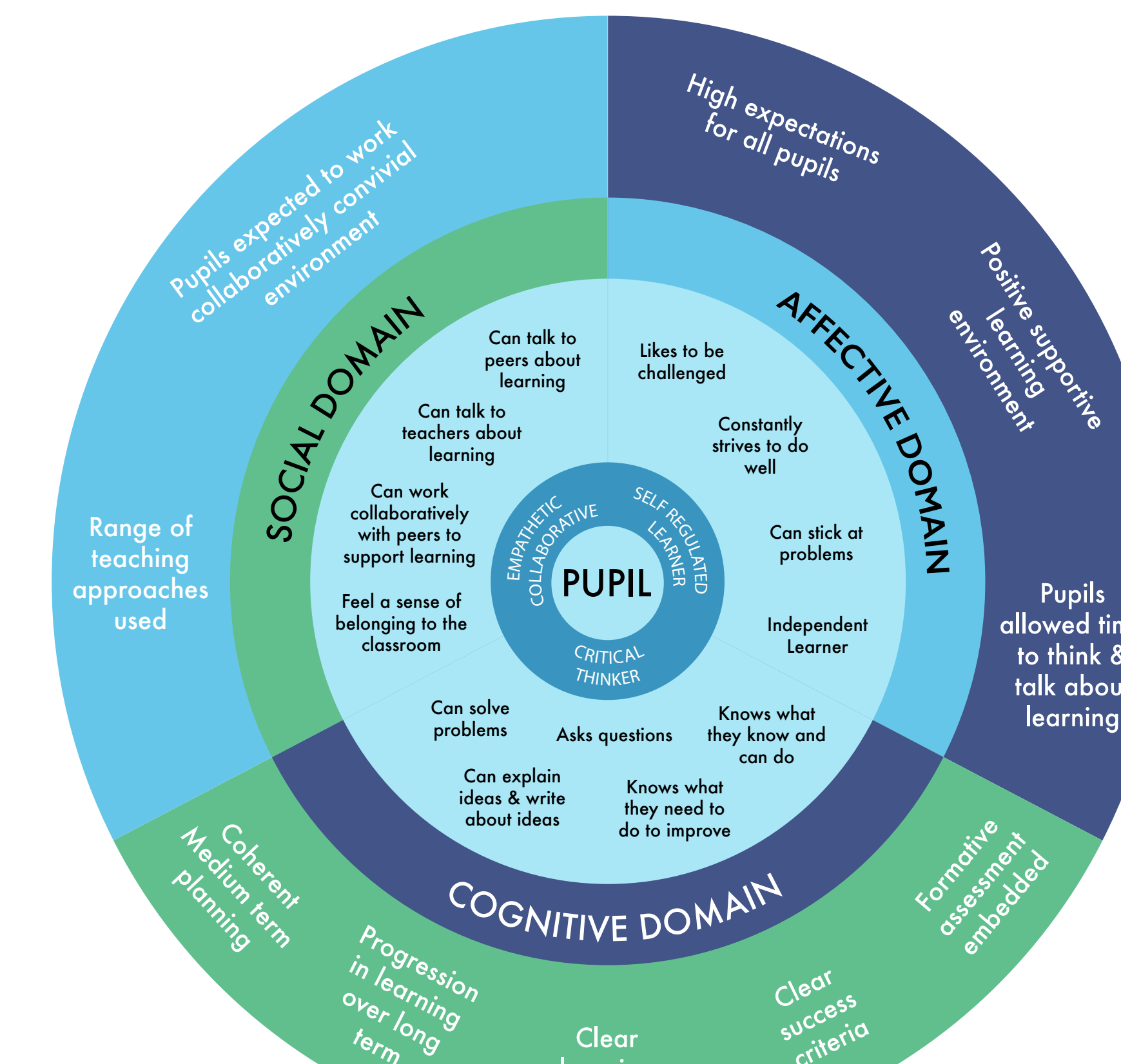
Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) were appointed to meet these challenges. In 2011, a team from the Faculty of the Education (FoE) in the University of Cambridge was commissioned to support NIS in designing and implementing an in-service teacher intervention. The MoESRK and NIS started out with a clear vision of what they wanted to achieve in the twenty-first century schools of post-soviet Kazakhstan. Although the prevailing global climate of Education Reform at the time was dominated by; competition, standardization, de-regulation of teachers and high stake testing, the University of Cambridge presented alternate routes to development. An overview of the process of turning the Kazakhstani MoESRK vision and policy into workable sustainable change is set out below.



Theory of Change



The ultimate goal of the teacher education intervention programme was to build on existing pedagogical practices but also to shift classroom teaching so that all pupils would become highly motivated and self-regulated learners.



Translating policy into workable sustainable change

Stage One: Kazakhstan team: clarify goals, parameters and non-negotiable decisions.

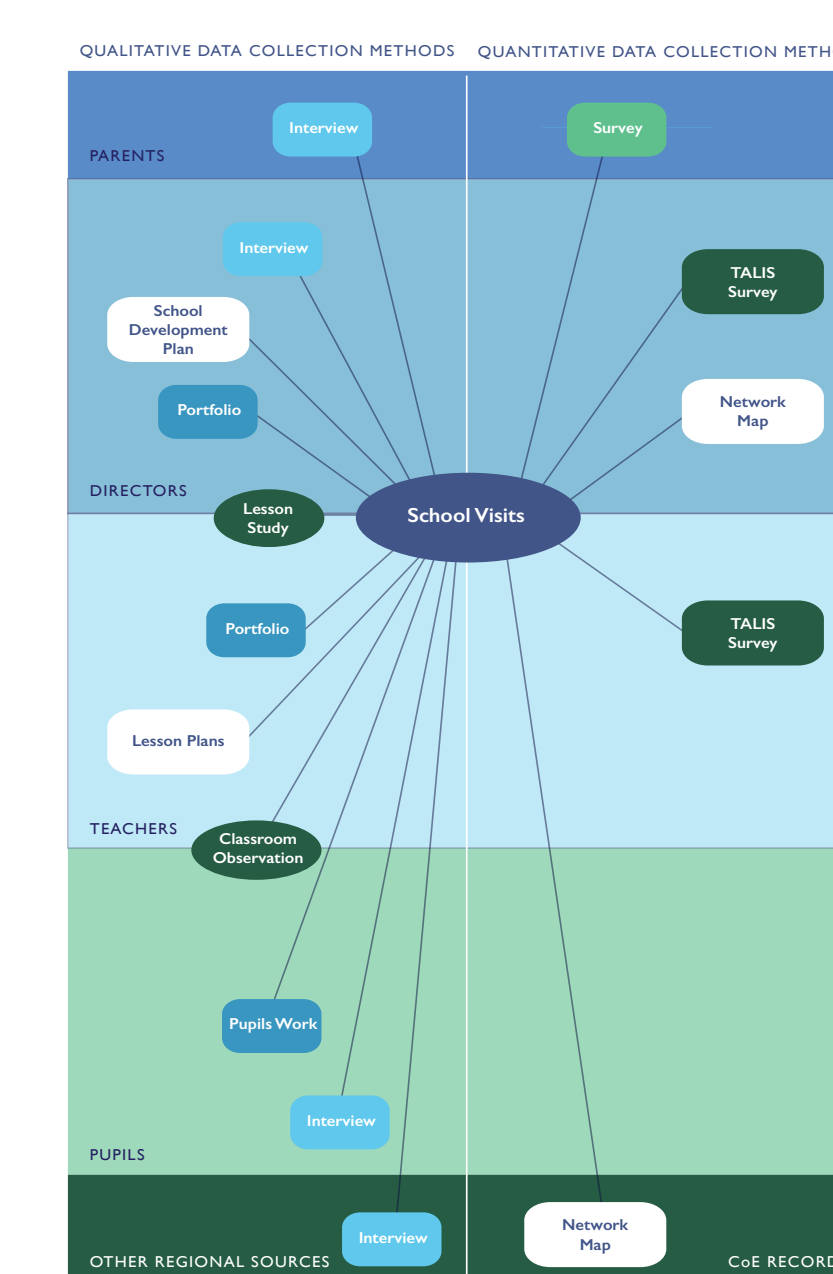
- Define what the development 'problem' is, supporting this with data and evidence.
- Clarify non-negotiable values, for example define what a 'good' Kazakhstan education means.
- Identify the aims and goals to be achieved and the timescale available.
- Consider options on how to achieve the goals including the funding available to introduce changes.
- Decide on project objectives which must be achieved through the intervention.

Stage Two: Joint Kazakhstani and FoE Cambridge teams: translation and implementation process

- Co-construct a common understanding of the 'problem'.
- Design and write a bespoke programme (FoE team). FoE and Kazakhstani Centre of Excellence (CoE) team interpret the proposed concept to fit the Kazakhstan context. Kazakhstan CoE team translate materials into Russian and Kazakh.
- Cascade model of train – trainers introduced. FoE trainers working with CoE trainers. Constant reflection of the implementation process and adaptation as the programmes are scaled and spread throughout Kazakhstan.
- 'Grass - roots' approach, starting with classroom teachers, then middle leaders, senior leaders and finally Head teachers.
- Set up a concurrent impact study of process and outcome evaluation

Research Data & Findings

Region	All Schools				Schools Visited			
	Total	Rural	Urban	Surveys	Rural	Urban	Total	
Astana City	71		71	30		6	6	
Almaty City	186		186	70		14	14	
Almaty	621	526	95	50	5	5	10	
Almaty	435	350	85	50	5	5	10	
Almaty	743	652	91	155	10	15	25	
Atyrau	195	138	57	50	5	5	10	
East Kz	687	534	153	85	10	10	20	
Karaganda	539	331	208	95	8	8	16	
Kostanay	555	475	80	45	3	3	6	
Kyzylorda	291	235	56	100	10	10	20	
Mangystau	126	81	45	40	8	8	16	
North Kz	570	511	59	35	3	3	6	
Pavlodar	406	321	85	40	5	10	15	
South Kz	1022	832	190	275	20	17	37	
West Kz	407	350	57	40	4	3	7	
Zhambyl	453	366	87	90	10	8	18	
Totals	7307	5702	1605	1250	63	62	125	
Survey	95% confidence level, 1.04 margin of error							
Schools	231 / 7307 3% Randomised stratified sample							



Data collected in the field The CoE Research team.



What we have learned

- Development is context specific.
- Always focus on the 'core activity' of education, which is teaching, through improving the day to day work in schools and in classrooms in particular.
- Involve diverse teams to help 'solve the problem'.
- Accelerate ideas and processes through network communities.
- A 'can do' approach is essential.
- Expect that things will not follow the original plan precisely BUT learn from this and respond rapidly.
- Engage in disciplined inquiry, constantly monitor and measure progress.
- Make deliberative professional judgements and know how to adapt approaches.

Process & Outcome Evaluation

